

REMARKS

Claims 1 has been amended to correct a spelling error. Claims 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 17, 20, 21, 24, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, 54, 55, 56 and 58 have been amended so they depend from a single claim. Accordingly, no new matter is involved. Claim 1 has been amended to include a continuous membrane for engaging dilating tissue in a continuous manner. Support for this can be found in Figure 1 and paragraph 45. Accordingly, no new matter is involved.

In the previous office action the Examiner rejected various claims for informalities and improper antecedence. As noted above, these errors have been corrected. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw these objections to Applicants' claims.

In the previous office action the Examiner rejected Applicants' claim 1 under 35 USC 102 over Ewerhardt et al. However, Ewerhardt fails to disclose a continuous membrane for engaging dilating tissue in a continuous manner. This feature helps prevent the pinching of tissue in the device, and more fully retracts the tissue for visibility. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection to claim 1. In addition, because all other claims depend from claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections to these claims as well.

Applicants submit that all claims are now fully allowable over the prior art cited by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner re-examine and favorably reconsider Applicants' claims in the form of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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